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REFUGEE SANITATION FACILITY SAFETY ACT OF 2019

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 615) to provide women and girls safe access to sanitation facilities in refugee camps.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 615

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Refugee Sanitation Facility Safety Act of 2019”.

SEC. 2. SECURE ACCESS TO SANITATION FACILITIES FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS.

Section 501 of the Foreign Relations Act, Fiscal Years 1994 and 1995 (22 U.S.C. 2601 note) is amended in subsection (a)—

(1) by striking “and” at the end of paragraph (10);

(2) by striking the period at the end of paragraph (11) and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(12) the provision of safe and secure access to sanitation facilities, with a special emphasis on women and girls, and vulnerable populations.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. McCAUL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 615, the Refugee Sanitation Facility Safety Act 2019.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, first of all, I want to thank Ms. MENG and Mr. ZELDIN for authoring this important bipartisan measure.

We are facing a devastating refugee crisis around the world right now. Over 25 million people are currently refugees having fled from violence, conflict, and crisis. Many of these people are now living in refugee camps.

And let me be clear, we need a foreign policy that addresses the root causes of this crisis.

So I am pleased we just considered my Global Fragility bill, which works to prevent the kind of conflict and instability that leads to these refugee crises.

The United States also needs to open its doors to more of these families who have fled violence in search of a better life. America should be leading the world to help in relocating these displaced people, so they can find new homes and start anew.

And we need to make sure that when people are living in refugee camps,

they are cared for and treated with dignity.

Sadly, far too many women and girls in these camps face danger right now. Bathrooms and shower facilities have often become dangerous places with predators taking advantage of poor lighting to stage attacks.

After facing the trauma of being driven from their homes, women and girls in refugee camps should not have to worry about being sexually assaulted, period.

We need to do what we can to make sure that refugee camps have safe, accessible sanitation facilities for everyone. So I am pleased that we are considering legislation today that works to do just that.

Madam Speaker, with H.R. 615, the State Department, when providing overseas assistance for refugees, will seek to ensure safe access to sanitation facilities, especially for those most vulnerable.

Madam Speaker, this is a good bipartisan bill. I am proud to support it, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. McCAUL. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the Refugee Sanitation Facility Safety Act.

I want to commend my two colleagues from New York, Representatives MENG and ZELDIN, and also Chairman ENGEL for the good work on this bill.

Around the world, conflict and humanitarian disasters are causing unprecedented levels of displacement in places like South Sudan, Somalia, Syria, Nigeria, and Venezuela.

Some of these crises have dragged on for years and even decades. Generations of young people are growing up knowing only life in a refugee camp where conditions can be dire, and even dangerous, for women, children, and other vulnerable populations.

In these situations, things as basic as lights and locks can make a difference between safe restrooms and bathing facilities in dangerous environments where refugees are vulnerable to sexual violence and other crimes.

This bill amends the Foreign Relations Act to ensure support for safe sanitation facilities for refugees and displaced persons living in camps around the world.

The U.S. continues to be the largest donor to refugees and displaced persons around the world, and we will continue to lead, while encouraging other countries to step up and do more.

In closing, Madam Speaker, the United States is a leading donor of humanitarian assistance to refugees around the world. Through the work of UNHCR and NGO partners, we are saving millions of lives every day.

This bill does not increase those assistance levels but will help ensure that our funding is put to effective use

in protecting the safety and dignity of vulnerable refugees.

Madam Speaker, I want to, again, thank Chairman ENGEL and Representatives MENG and ZELDIN for their leadership, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, in closing, let me say that we are facing a refugee crisis around the world. Wars, violence, instability—millions of people have fled their homes in search of safety.

We need to do what we can to help these people find new homes and start anew. And while they are living in temporary refugee camps, we need to make sure they have the tools to stay safe and healthy.

The Refugee Sanitation Facility Safety Act of 2019 provides refugee women and girls with safe access to sanitation facilities.

This is one clear, straightforward way we can help those most vulnerable people. It is a good, commonsense bill; I am pleased to support it. And I thank Mr. McCAUL as well for his support.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 615.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

DIGITAL GLOBAL ACCESS POLICY ACT OF 2019

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1359) to promote Internet access in developing countries and update foreign policy toward the Internet, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1359

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Digital Global Access Policy Act of 2019” or the “Digital GAP Act”.

SEC. 2. PURPOSE.

The purpose of this Act is to—

(1) encourage the efforts of developing countries to improve and secure mobile and fixed access to the Internet in order to catalyze innovation, spur economic growth and job creation, improve health, education, and financial services, reduce poverty and gender inequality, mitigate disasters, and promote free speech, democracy, and good governance;

(2) promote build-once policies and approaches and the multi-stakeholder approach to Internet governance; and

(3) ensure the effective use of United States foreign assistance resources toward that end.

SEC. 3. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings: